619 The tribesmen pay no attention to political boundary lines. When convenient, however, the Bedouin will take advantage of the frontier. An ambitious government collector of sheep and camel taxes, for example, may make it advisable for the tribes to assume a different nationality merely by shifting their tents into a region where the government authorities may be less exacting. 1)

619 x166 656 The nomads thus represent a national problem, and tribal settlement on land has become an important domestic issue in the Bedouin inhabited areas. On the one hand, the governments have checked and tried to eliminate the abuses perpetrated by the nomads, and on the other they have encouraged the process of transition to agriculture. Raiding was stopped, collection of khuwa outlawed, encroachment on areas of cultivation prohibited.

The positive measures for solving the Bedouin problem were on the whole inadequate, but settlement was given an appreciable impetus by the distribution of land, extension of financial aid, education and technical advice.

CHAPTER V

361 x166 The conflicting attitudes towards the Bedouin problem

There are two, basically opposing attitudes towards the Bedouin problem:

a. that of the realists who propose settlement of the nomads

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1. Report, 1923-24, p. 23

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166 up for the sake of economic self-improvement.

178 The nomad who has settled creates a vacuum on the fringes of the desert which is filled by other desert tribes destined to undergo the same evolution, and thus the process of sedentarisation goes on indefinitely.

CHAPTER IX

Survey of Recent Developments that Affected Bedouin Society

Saudi Arabia

133 Except for a few fertile oases, the vast area of Saudi Arabia consists entirely of arid desert and steppes which are green only for a short period in the winter. Arabia is the cradle and the classic country of the Bedouin.

656 166 The rule of Ibn Saud has been the turning point in the history of Central Arabia. In his drive to found a powerful state, Ibn Saud realised that he must settle the Bedouin within his frontiers if the political structure he created was to last. Citizens, united in purpose and attached to the soil, and not roving nomads, constitute a reliable element which can assure permanency to a state organization.

656 186 To overcome the traditional tribal disunity, Ibn Saud inspired the Bedouin with the doctrines of Wahhabi puritanism which gave them a consciousness of unity. The Ikhwan (brethern, Wahhabi confraternity), founded by Ibn Saud in 1912,[1] is the modern revival

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1. 1912 is the date usually given for the founding of the Ikhwan. cf. Royal Institute, 1930, p. 85
According to Arnold Toynbee, however, the Ikhwan was founded in 1910. cf. Royal Institute, 1925, Vol. 1, p. 251

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656 186 of the Wahhabi movement which originated in the 18th century.

X166 656 The Bedouin members of the Ikhwan were induced to sell their camels and settle down to an agricultural existence. Settlement was carried out by giving to the tribesmen land, money and technical aid.

162 X166 656 Sedentarisation has always been an important part of Ibn Saud's domestic policy. In 1928 there were already over 10[illegible] Ikhwan settlements in the Nejd. Artawiya, the oldest of the Ikhwan colonies, came into existence in 1912 and had by 1928 a population of about 10 000. In Ameen Rihani's list of 100 odd localities there are mentioned 34 settlements with an approximate population of 6 000 - 12 000. Dukhnah, a colony of the Harb tribe, has about 15 000 people.[1] In a few years Ibn Saud has thus succeeded in converting a great number of Bedouin into settled citizens.

656 425 In 1948 the government of Saudi Arabia declared its new national policy of granting state land to any citizen ready and willing to put it under cultivation.[2] In Arabia settlement is an artificial enterprise because it involves Bedouin, who from the economic point of view could continue their pastoral life for centuries yet. Of course, Ibn Saud is guided more by the political problems which the Bedouin present to his state structure than by economic necessity.

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1. Rihani's study of Ibn Saud contains a list of new settlements built by the tribes of Nejd under the influence of the Ikhwan. Each colony is given with its quota of fighting men. This figure is one third of the male, or one sixth of the total population. cf. Rihani, 1928, pp. 118-119
2. Afif I Tannous, 1951, p. 15

622 and share-croppers on the holdings of the chiefs who rapidly
425 changed from their traditional role of "primus inter pares" to that of a semi-feudal landlord.

• 656 In the thirties the administration of Iraq became increasingly
425 aware of the plight of the Bedouin. In 1934 three committees con-
X166 sisting of high government officials and tribal sheikhs were formed for the purpose of studying the problem of land distribution among the tribesmen and of encouraging them to take up agriculture.

A plan was formulated with the aim of settling 40 000 Bedouin over a period of ten years, at the rate of 4 000 per annum.[1] Guided by the administration policy of Bedouin settlement, the Minister of the Interior proceeded in 1936 with the assignment of land to the nomadic tribes and landless fellahin. Distribution was made in small plots of about five acres per head. Provision was also made for financial assistance needed to initiate cultivation. Prospective settlers, in turn, were subject to the stipulation that their villages and houses must be constructed along modern lines.[2]

At the end of 1936 Prime Minister Hikmat Suleiman declared in the outline of his government program that the authorities are vitally concerned with the settlement of the tribes and ready to provide each family with land. He stated that legislation would

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1. Oriente Moderno, Vol. XIV, pp. 483-4 1934
2. Oriente Moderno, Vol. XVI, p. 279 1936

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also be effected to improve lines of communication, so that the nomads may be able to benefit from public services.[1] 656 425 166K

Since the end of the Second World War the government of Iraq has begun to put into practice the policy of encouraging small landownership by distributing State Domain lands among landless peasants and tribesmen. The first post-war project was started in 1945 on the Dujayilah lands, south of Baghdad, where 88 000 acres of state land were parcelled out in plots of about 62.5 acres per family. The new settlement which started in 1945 with 85 families has presently about 1 200. The settlers come from neighboring tribes where they and their kin had worked as share-croppers on the estates of the sheikhs.[2] In 1946 another project, the Hadiyah settlement, was completed. It involved the distribution of approximately 200 000 acres of irrigated state land among the members of the Ubeyd tribe.[3]

The observation has been made that the inequality of land-ownership had a great effect on many of the tribesmen and in the absence of sufficient agricultural projects they began to flock to the cities.[4] Progressive circles in Iraq have realised for a number of years that settling the nomads must go hand in hand with the creation of suitable land conditions.

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1. Oriente Moderno, Vol. XXII, pp. 41-42, 1937
2. Burns, 1951, p. 362
3. Tannous, 1951, p. 16
4. Khayat, 1950, pp. 225-226

SYRIA
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656 The idea of land reform aiming at the encouragement of small
425 and medium land-holdings and settlement of the nomads as well as
x166 landless peasants on small plots has been very popular since the end of the Second World War. In 1945 the Parliament of Iraq passed a bill (Law #23) authorizing the government to distribute State Domain land (over 80 per cent of the now uncultivated land in Iraq)[1] among fellahin and tribesmen on the basis of small private ownership. This law has made possible the successful Bujaylah land settlement project. In 1950 the Law #23 of 1945, originally restricted to a limited region, was made applicable to additional areas in all parts of the country.[2]

Recent planning may bring about a controlled agrarian revolution by creating a class of small farmers on 25 - 35 per cent of Iraq's cultivable land.[3]

Syria

+166 Throughout the latter part of the 19th and the beginning
656 of the 20th century encouragement of Bedouin settlement in Syria was an integral part of the tribal policy of the Ottoman government.

The authorities did not make any constructive effort to effect sedentarization of the tribesmant although transition to

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1. Burns, 1951, p. 362
2. For detailed discussion of the settlement projects in Iraq see: Burns, 1951, pp. 362 - 66
3. New York Times, November 4, 1950

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agriculture was taking place on a small scale. During the latter part of the century the Weld Ali tribe began to take up cultivation near Homs and the Hesene in the Hauran.[1]

The leaders of the Syrian tribes, however, particularly the Anezeh and West Shammar sheikhs, benefited from Sultan Abdul Hamid's policy aiming at winning their support by gifts of land and villages. In 1870 Jed'an of the Fed'an obtained from the government several villages and large tracts of land.[2] Mejhem, the grandson of Jed'an, owns two villages on the Euphrates besides the property which he inherited from his grandfather. In the 1930's he acquired additional ground near 'Ain 'Isa where he built a house.[3] Nuri al-Sha'lan, the sheikh of the Rwala, owned substantial property consisting of vast estates, a house in Damascus and several motor-cars.[4]

622 425 656

Since the end of the First World War, all the important tribal leaders of Syria have been in possession of extensive land-holdings, and most of them have taken an increasing interest in cultivation. In 1928 Sheikh Saleemeh of the Sba'a Ommeen undertook to restore an ancient system of canals and began tillage on land which had been heretofore desert.[5] In 1935 the sheikh of the Sba'a Bteinat doubled his cultivation in

622 423 241

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1. Oppenheim, 1939, p. 73
2. ibid., p. 79
3. ibid., p. 81
4. ibid., pp. 105 seq.
5. Report, 1935, p. 106

PALESTINE ISRAEL BEDOUINS MJ4

The British Mandatory regime had no concrete tribal settlement policy although assistance was rendered to the Bedouin, whenever necessary, by means of relief measures such as employment in public works, monetary gifts, assignment of land, etc. 657

Six desert schools were founded in the vicinity of Beersheba to serve the educational needs of the southern tribes. No special Bedouin school was established in the North. The nomads who were concerned with the education of their children had to send them to the government school. 658 361

Settlement Policy of the Government of Israel

Similarly to the policies of Ibn Saud the government of Israel is pursuing a vigorous policy of transforming the remaining 17 500 nomads of the Negev into settled communities of farmers and pastoralists. 166X 656

The Israeli authorities have closed the southern border to prevent Bedouin infiltration from across the frontier.

After the occupation of Beersheba in 1948, sheikhs representing 16 large and small tribes pledged their loyalty to the State of Israel. In the Arab-Israel war of 1948/49 they were friendly or at least neutral. 1)

The following extract from a report will clearly illustrate the changes which are taking place among the nomads of the Negev as result of Israel's Bedouin settlement policy: 166X 361

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1. Lourie, Palestine Post, November 24, 1949

658 for the southern tribes of Transjordan. The second desert school follows the movement of the northern tribes, classes being alternately held at Muaqqar and at Azraq, both in the Amman district.[1]

X166 In general it must be stated that the creation of suitable
● 656 conditions for tribal settlement was attempted on a scale which
241 was wholly inadequate, the chief obstacles being the lack of a concrete policy and the financial means to implement it. Nevertheless, in Transjordan, the majority of the nomads are actually ready to settle down if the opportunity is given them. Larger tribes such as the Howeitat and Beni Hasan are increasingly practicing agriculture as their main occupation. Smaller tribes, living in northern Kerak, have always held cultivation in high esteem.[2] Tribesmen from Balqa are engaged as agricultural laborers on the estates of the Beni Sakhr,[3] although most sheikhs of the Jordan tribes have their lands worked by permanent tenants, fellahin who come from the Nablus and Hebron areas of Palestine.[4]

178 Summary of the Bedouin settlement movement in the area
X166 a. spontaneous socio-economic change

The internal, sociological change among the nomads is the ever-operating phenomenon of assimilation to the settled society which they contact.

How the transition gradually occurs among the tribes

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1. Report, 1938, p. 351
2. Jaussen, 1908, p. 243
3. Epstein, 1938, p. 233
4. Poliak, 1942

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

726 If he sees that the odds are even, and the raiders are about as strong as he, he will fight, and fight superbly, encouraged by the cries of his women. In the case of the 'Ajman and 'Awazim, he is often helped by his womenfolk who bring him ammunition, water, etc. Women have been known to display remarkable indifference to danger and bullets on these occasions. It is only when he has no chance (and years of this sort of warfare have trained him to size up such a situation quickly), that the Badawin considers discretion the better part of valour.

721 A Badawin's passion is his camel, and if he has lost one by raid, or by simple theft, he will not rest till he has discovered where it is and what shaikh, individual, or tribe has got it in his possession. He has many methods of finding this out, the most common being by the system of *bilasa*, i.e. payment of money to a neutral to go and spy out the land and locate his animal.

As raids are often carried out from a great distance, this process of running down the raiders or camel thieves often takes many weary months. I have known camels which have been taken from near Kuwait located near Jauf, Rutba, Hu.uf and Hail—each place over 500 miles away. If the raiders are known enemies, time is not wasted trying to locate stolen animals, counter-raid is promptly resorted to till a man gets his own back and more. If the raiders are unknown, or have worked a night surprise, then of course they must be discovered and the camels located, before counter-measures are taken. If peace reigns in the land, the discovered camels will be applied for and recovered by the laws of *'Arafa* (see Chapter XXXIII).

Stealing wandering camels, even though the owners are not at war with a man's tribe, is not wrong—it is merely clever, and a man finding a stray camel will not hesitate to pinch it, and take it along to his home. If the owner finds it eventually, it will be handed over, but if he does not, then so much the better. The 'Ajman and Dhafir are particularly fond of this game.

721 656 In Sa'udi Arabia the strong arm of Bin Sa'ud has done much to stop indiscriminate raiding and stealing, and this perhaps more than anything else has been responsible for that Ruler's unpopularity to-day. "If you stop us raiding you stop our source of life," says the Badawin, "for we have neither crops nor palm trees, nor are we shop keepers able to sell goods and make money." Not only is this state-

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
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ment true, but the situation is yearly getting worse, especially since the motor car has practically killed the camel export trade of Arabia. Thirty years ago many hundred thousand camels were annually sold to Egypt, North Africa, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Iraq and Persia, and brought money to the Badawin world.

Bin Sa'ud realises the Badawin's grievance in this respect, but steadfastly refuses to sanction indiscriminate raiding, which tends to disrupt his kingdom. He tried to counter the evil by giving subsidies to high and low in the Badawin world, and rewarding all who come to visit him and pay respects. He no doubt hopes in time to get round the danger by developing the mineral wealth of his country, notably oil and gold. But will he succeed?

DECLARATION OF WAR

Should war be imminent between two tribes or primitive Arab States, there are regular rules which have to be observed. There must be a proper and honourable declaration of hostilities. The word *niga* is used to denote a declaration of war. It is never used between individuals. The offended tribe, either by letter or verbal message, informs the tribe it wishes to fight that *niga* has been sent them. This literally means the "warning of war". It is bad form and contrary to Arab honour to start a war by means of a surprise attack. *Niga* is the opposite of *hidna*, which means "cessation of war". *Allag* means a "truce". The expression *Mardud al niga 'alaikum* is the official warning of war, and was commonly heard in the desert in the old days.

I am told that in August 1933 when H.M. King Bin Sa'ud declared war on Yaman, the Imám Yahya sent the King a letter with the following words, *Mardud al niga 'alaikum, wa waladna Saif al Islam Ahmad yusalkum* (The war warning is sent you and my son, Saif al Islam Ahmad, will come to you). Bin Sa'ud is reported to have sent reply, "Your son is welcome. We also have a son Sa'ud, who will be pleased to meet him on arrival." The tale certainly was brought me by some Badawin friends from Riyadh, though the wording of the messages may have been the result of a too keen imagination.

When a tribe sends a challenge of *niga* to another, it is sometimes the custom to add by word of mouth or letter, that "such and such a